



THE NET

Lincoln Business Watch



SHOPLIFTING- recent trends

Several retail stores have been victimized recently by thieves employing similar techniques. At least two people, working together, enter the store and look around to determine what they can steal. One of them will then approach the nearest employee or sales desk and begin to ask questions, creating a distraction, so that their partner can begin to load up on any merchandise they can grab. Usually merchandise near to the entrance is targeted so several items can be grabbed and taken out of the store quickly. The first person will try to maintain the distraction long enough for their partner to "grab and go" and then will abruptly end their contact with the clerk. Please consider the following tips to avoid being a victim of these tactics.

- Be alert when groups enter the store and do not tolerate loitering.
- Have adequate sales help during peak times.
- Plan your sales floor layout. Do not put popular and high priced items near exits.
- Know your sales floor and which areas are hard to see. Know where your mirrors or cameras are located.
- Arrange your store for maximum observation.
- Be alert of any customer who loiters or appears nervous. Use your "sixth sense" if something does not seem right.

AUTO THEFT PREVENTION

Toward the end of 2008 there was an upswing in the number of cars being stolen. One method the thieves used repeatedly was to enter a car and then break the steering column open to gain access to the ignition switch wires. Once they could get to the ignition wires they would start the car and then drive it away. The following list contains some prevention measures to employ so that you are less likely to be victimized.

- ♦ Never leave your car running unattended, even to dash into a business, store, etc.;
- ♦ Never leave any keys in the car or ignition, inside a locked garage, or in hide-a-key boxes;
- ♦ Always roll up your windows and lock the car, even if it is parked in front of your home;
- ♦ Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Put them in the trunk out of sight;
- ♦ Always park in high-traffic, well-lighted areas, when possible;
- ♦ Install a mechanical device that locks the steering wheel, column, or brakes. These devices will deter some criminals:
 - * *Locking Devices: Steering Wheel Bar Lock; Hood Restraint; Steering Column Collar; Tire/Wheel Locks; Gearshift Lock;*
 - * *Cut-off Devices: Ignition Kill Switch; Fuel Kill Switch;*
- ♦ Investigate the purchase of a vehicle theft tracking/security system, especially if you own one of the frequently stolen model vehicles;
- ♦ Never leave personal identification documents, vehicle ownership title, or credit cards in your vehicle;
- ♦ If you must leave your key with a valet, attendant, or mechanic leave only the ignition key. Make sure you are dealing with a reputable firm;
- ♦ Copy your license plate and vehicle information (VIN) numbers on a card and keep them with you. If your vehicle is stolen, the police will need this information to take a report;
- ♦ Many vehicles today come with some type of security system from the factory. Normally there are upgraded systems available if you ask. The best choice are systems that shut off the fuel supply so that a car can't be started or driven.
- ♦ **If your vehicle is stolen, report it to the police immediately.**

2008 YEAR END STATISTICS

Through 2008 LPD officers were dispatched to 128,063 calls for service— 7.4% fewer calls than in 2007. Traffic accidents were down 8.2% from the previous year with a total of 8,918. The statistics include 5.3% fewer injury accidents and a 50% reduction in fatality crashes. There were 2,253 DWI arrests made— a 28.7% increase from 2007. During the year there were 331 commercial burglary investigations; 1,852 larcenies from buildings; 1,635 shoplifts; and, 58 thefts from coin-op equipment with all of these reports being fewer in number when compared to 2007. There are several factors affecting the reduction of reported incidents one of which continues to be citizens' willingness to communicate with the police department. Calling the police directly has allowed officers to make timely responses and stop crimes in progress. Other call-in avenues such as Crime Stoppers have also been instrumental in making arrests and clearing these crimes. Let's strive to work together and continue this downward trend in crime through 2009!

“The NET”

Business Watch

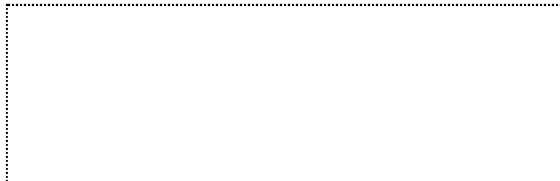
Lincoln Police Department

Crime Prevention Unit

575 South 10th Street

Lincoln NE 68508

Return Service Requested



Business Watch Up-grade

In order to bring you better information in a more user friendly format and to reduce paper waste, Lincoln Police will now offer the Business Watch newsletter “The Net” and any alerts on-line. To receive these police services, we would request a current business email. Your business email will not be given out. By using the email, we can send out timely alerts faster than traditional mail.

This would also be a great time to up-date your current Business Watch information. So, this is what we would like you to do:

1. Make an email using your business email. In that email list your current Business Watch contact information in the following manner:

Business Name / Address
Phone number / Fax number

2. Send us that email via
lpdwatch@cjis.lincoln.ne.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact Lincoln Police at 441-8294.

Thanks.

Officer Tim Abele
Business Watch Coordinator
441-8294

False Alarms

Many homes and businesses have an alarm system to help protect the property. While this can provide an alert if there is an intruder, there is the potential for false alarms to occur as well. In 2007, the Lincoln Police responded to 3,514 false alarm calls. This not only utilizes police resources, but resources for the location as well. These can be the result of things like mechanical problems and employee or resident error in operating the system.

In Lincoln, it is a crime to have more than four false alarms in a 12 month period. The penalty is a \$25 fine for each additional alarm after this threshold is met. Reducing the frequency of false alarms can be beneficial to both the police and the business or residence.

False alarms can be reduced by ensuring the alarm system is properly installed and maintained, and by providing good training to those who will operate it. If any mechanical problems develop with the system, they should be addressed immediately. Any people who will be new to using the system should be given specific information on how to use it properly. In addition, call lists should be kept up to date with the alarm company so in the event of an alarm, someone can be contacted if needed. These few simple measures can help minimize false alarms, and can help free up resources for both the police and the public.

“The NET” is available on-line at: www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police/crime/net.htm